

March 19, 2002

Ms. Mary Peters
Federal Highway Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
400 7th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Ms. Peters:

Please accept this letter of appreciation for your endeavors associated with the Great River Bridge project. The Great River Bridge is to be located in the Mississippi River Delta Region, one of the most economically depressed areas of our nation. The Great River Bridge is of significant importance to Mississippi and Arkansas.

Mississippi's partner in the Great River Bridge project, the Arkansas State Highway Commission, recently informed the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) that \$7,500,000 allocated to the project by Congress in the FY 2002 U.S. Department of Transportation Appropriation Act would not be distributed to the project by FHWA. MDOT advised me that the \$7,500,000 could not be distributed because the appropriation was made from Bridge Discretionary funds and the new bridge does not meet the criteria for such funds. However, I understand from your March 2, 2002, correspondence to Dan Flowers of the Arkansas State Highway Commission that your office is working with Congress to correct this conflict with the statutory eligibility requirements so that the \$7,500,000 will be available to the project.

I appreciate your assistance in this matter. Thank you for your cooperation and continued support of this most important Delta project.

Very truly yours,

RONNIE MUSGROVE

RM:klr